

Captain Brabazon

BY B. M. CROKER

A Military Romance of South Africa

CHAPTER XVIII.—(Continued.)

"It's no use, Miles!" he gasped, faintly, with half-closed, glazing eyes. "I'm bound to go; but I can't bear to think of your running this risk for me, when every dogma may be full of those fellows, every bit of bush swarming with them."

"There's not a soul on the veldt but ourselves, Ted," returned the other, boldly; "don't you be uneasy about it. The ambulance ought to be here in an hour and a half, and we will have you in camp in less than no time. You must not talk like this."

"But I must—I have so little time. Say good-by to all the fellows for me, and to Farrar, my chum; he took my duty today. Well, I'll never pay him now."

"What could Miles say? A horrible chill conviction that what Teddy said was true was creeping over him. His failing, struggling breath, his feeble voice, all pointed to something more mortal than a severe wound."

"Don't talk, Teddy, my dear boy," he implored; "it's the worst thing you can do."

"Let me go on," with a faint gesture; "I have so little time. I know I'm going," he gasped, "and I won't say I'm not sorry, for I am. She will never know now—" A pause of some seconds, and then he spoke again. "Give my love to Gus and Flo and Aunt Jane—yes, and—with a visible effort, "Mrs. Brabazon—why should I bear her ill will now?—and Esme—this will be hard on her," catching his breath; "but she will marry you, Miles—I know it—tell her I said so. And you will take Kitty—poor Kitty—and be kind to her, for my sake. Kitty," raising his failing voice, "come here; put down your head, old girl, and say good-by."

Low as he spoke, her eager ears heard his well-known call, and she came at once and gently pushed her soft, brown nose into his hand.

"You will send everything I have—it's not much—to Esme, and let me be buried as I am—in my uniform. I did not wear it long!"

"Oh, Teddy!" exclaimed his companion, in a broken voice, "you cannot give yourself up like this. What can I do for you? Heaven knows how gladly I would give my life for yours. How could I go home without you? What could I say to Esme? I dare not face her alone," wiping his damp forehead, chafing his hands as he spoke, and pouring the last few drops of spirits down his comrade's throat. "Keep up; the ambulance and the doctor have surely left camp by this time. We ought to have them with us in less than an hour!"

"Yes, but I won't be here—when they come—they will be too late. I'm glad you are with me, Miles—you who have been a brother to me—it's not so very hard to die, after all. Where is your hand? Let me hold it—for I'm going to set out on a long, long journey—longer than we thought when I left camp this morning"—a pause, then a faint pressure of the hand, and a still fainter, almost inaudible whisper, saying: "Miles, are you there? Tell Esme—it will be all right," and this was the last word.

Vainly Miles spoke, vainly he bent his ear to his cousin's lips. There was no sound now—only a vast, irresponsive silence. Thick, black darkness had suddenly set in; the night was cold, the moments leaden. Miles himself was weak from loss of blood. Vainly he chafed Teddy's hands; vainly he told himself, "He had only fainted." He strained his ears anxiously for coming hoofs and welcome voices. There was no trampling of horsemen, but his practiced sportsman's keen sense of hearing caught another less reassuring sound, the sound of many footsteps—stealthy, bare footsteps—stealing through the high grass close by. There were great numbers, probably a portion of the impi they had already encountered, for the stealthy march lasted for a long time. The huge bowlder sheltered him effectually, and they passed in the darkness. The last tread at length died away, and that moment of throbbing suspense was tired over in safety.

When the end came Miles never knew; gradually, gradually, the hand in his hand relaxed its hold, had become first cool, then cold, then icy. He was dead, Teddy was dead. How strange, how impossible, it sounded to say, "Teddy is dead." How was this to be told to Esme? Esme, whose whole heart was given to this favorite brother! How dark and silent and bitter; cold it was!

The black sky above, the hard veldt beneath him, were whirling and reeling in one giddy circle, and he remembered no more.

Long afterward, when a strong party arrived, with lights and rugs and restoratives, and an ambulance, a party comprising one or two officers, including Captain Gee, that little gentleman, for once in his life, became livid when his quick eyes rested, as he first believed, on the two dead Brabazons, with the faithful brown charger keeping guard over them. On closer examination it was discovered that Miles was only insensible from exposure and loss of blood; but with the knitted cardigan coat, of which he had deprived himself hours previously, they covered a corpse.

Next morning, at daybreak, there was a military funeral, and Teddy was buried within a short distance of the camp. His cousin, pale as death itself, with his arm in a sling, walked alone behind the rude coffin as chief mourner, and Kitty followed her master for the last time. The coffin was covered by a Union Jack, and carried by the men of Teddy's regiment; not a few tough troopers felt a very unusual tightness in the throat when they heard the hard, yellow earth rattle on the coffin of "Gentleman Brown." The dead trooper was buried beside him. They lie on the spur of a hill, around them there stretches a wide sea of waving grass; above their heads are two rude wooden crosses. No foot is likely to come that way; no voice, no sound, disturbs their repose; only a vast plain, only an

awful silence, only two soldiers' graves.

And Miles was as one who mourned for his brother; he was stunned. How painful was the gap in his life! How he missed the bright face, the cheery voice, that half a dozen times a day had been thrust into his tent; the face he had known but so recently, and yet had liked so well! How blank were rides and foraging parties now, when he was forced to say to himself, "Last time we came here it was with Teddy!"

He collected his belongings, which were few, and put them up with the aid of Teddy's soldier servant, whose voice was to rub the back of his horny hand across his eyes. But there was one little box that Miles investigated alone; it contained two photographs of Esme; a small, battered, brown prayer book, presented by her ten years previously, in a struggling round hand—between its leaves were two or three withered flowers; there was his watch, with a broken mainspring; a program of the regimental tournament at York, and last, not least, carefully folded up in silver paper and an envelope, a tiny four-button woman's glove, rather worn.

"It was not Esme's," said Miles, as he turned it carefully over, with a lover's critical discrimination. "It probably belonged to Teddy's nameless sweetheart."

He did not put it up along with the other relics, for it told a tale intelligible to him alone; it was not to be thrown away, this token that Teddy had treasured; no, he himself would keep this little tan glove, belonging to a girl he had never seen, whose name he would never know; nor would she herself ever learn the fate of her mysterious, unreturned lover. He had died, and made no sign.

Miles took part in that fifty minutes' battle, when a solid square of English kept the bold and reckless enemy at bay by a deadly wall of fire, and subsequently returned with the column to Natal.

Of course he was the owner of Kitty, having purchased her for one hundred and fifty pounds, a purchase which reduced his exchequer to a very low ebb; but he was resolved to have her at any price, and a feeling that he had the best right to her restrained the lancers from bidding for her, when their late brother officer's scanty possessions were sold by the committee of adjustment.

CHAPTER XIX.

To Mr. Bell was sent the telegram announcing Teddy's death, and it was with a heavy heart that he walked up to Baronsford that lovely June morning. He himself had been very fond of the family scapegrace, and his usually cheery, rosy countenance was downcast and luddered graver and less florid than usual. Everything around seemed out of keeping with the tidings of which he was the bearer. A bright blue sky, unclouded by even one tiny white fleecy, busy bees roaming importantly to and fro, butterflies flickering and darting across his path, the air loaded with the sweet perfume of new-mown hay, and birds singing in the bushes as if they were holding a morning concert. Mr. Bell, with eight words in his pocket, is going to turn this house of sunshine and laughter into a house of gloom and mourning. The swing door flew back with a bang, and displayed Gussie, tennis bat in hand, and grotesque scarlet felt hat with embroidered sunflower on her head. "Hurry, hurry, Esme, don't be all day! Oh, Mr. Bell," as she suddenly confronted him, "this is a piece of luck! the very man to make up a set at tennis," she cried, affectionately. "Come along at once, you shall be my partner. There's going to be a tournament at the Clipperton's to-morrow, and we want to get our hands well in."

Well does Mr. Bell know that neither to-morrow, nor for many to-morrows, will there be a tennis tournament for them. His face unconsciously conveys a reflection of his thoughts, his round, merry countenance looks grave, his twinkling, frank, blue eyes dim and misty.

Annie, who had seen that there was something wrong at the very first glance, hurried to him with a white, startled face, and said, meekly:

"It's not Miles, is it?"

"No," he returned, averting his glance and shaking his head.

"Then it is Teddy," cried Esme, with vivid lips, having but that moment come upon the scene. "It is, it is. I see it in your face, Mr. Bell. He has been wounded! I'm sure he has," with sudden conviction, seizing the rector by the arm as she spoke. "Oh," in a voice of concentrated anguish, "do not be afraid to tell me the worst! I can bear it, I can, indeed. I have a right to know first," interposing herself between him and the drawing room door. "Is he badly wounded?"

"I must see Mrs. Brabazon," he returned, huskily, pushing her aside with assumed brusqueness, and shaking off her detaining hand with a gesture of decision. "For once he was glad and thankful to seek sanctuary with the head of the house in her own apartment, and to shut out that girl's agonized white face."

What news was he telling Mrs. Brabazon behind that fast shut door? The three he had left outside stood in the hall in a torture of suspense that petrified the power of speech, but their eyes asked each other the fatal question, "Who was it?" Miles was safe, both Annie and Esme felt with a blessed thrill of relief; but Teddy, Florian?

Alas! they would know soon enough! Within half an hour not only they—the household—but Miss Jane, and the entire village had heard the bad news, that neither as private nor officer would any of them again see Edward Brabazon; never again would his hearty laugh, and constant if somewhat tuneless, whistle, be heard about the Mexton lanes, never again would he pound the field with the harriers on a four-year-old colt. This time the blinds were pulled down in earnest for poor Teddy!

GHOSTS ARE PLAINLY VISIBLE.

Some People So Constituted that They See Supernatural Beings.

There is no doubt that a person may apparently see objects and hear words which another person close by cannot see and hear. Such impressions are to be referred not to actually existing objects, but to the action of the subject's mind. Dr. Abercromby tells us of one patient who could, by directing his attention to an idea, call up to sight the appropriate image of scene, though the thing called up were an object he had never seen but had merely imagined. When meeting a friend in the street he could not be sure whether the appearance was his friend or a spectral illusion till he had tried to touch it and had heard the voice. Goethe saw an exact counterpart of himself advancing toward him, an experience repeated by Wilkie Collins. Sir Walter Scott relates that soon after the death of Lord Byron he read an account of the deceased poet. On stepping into the hall immediately after he saw right before him, in a standing posture, the exact representation of his departed friend, whose recollection had been so strongly brought to his imagination. After stopping a moment to note the extraordinary resemblance he advanced toward it and the figure gradually disappeared.

Some of the cases narrated by Sir David Brewster are particularly instructive. The subject was a lady (Mrs. A.) and her hallucinations were carefully studied by her husband and Sir David. On one occasion she saw her husband, as she thought, who had gone out half an hour before, standing within two feet of her in the drawing-room. She was astonished to receive no response when she spoke to him. She remembered that Sir David had told her to press one eyeball with the finger when the impression of any real object would be doubled. She tried to apply the test, but the figure walked away and disappeared. The simple scientific experiment diverted her attention from the creation of her mind, and this, no longer being in sole possession, could not maintain itself and was dissolved. Another hallucination took the form of her dead sister-in-law. The figure appeared in a dress which Mrs. A. had never seen, but which had been described to her by a common friend.—Westminster Review.

HIS FIRST FIRE ASSIGNMENT.

Excuse of a New Reporter for Neglecting Duty.

"Say, hustle down to the stock yards right away," said the city editor to the new reporter. "There's a fire down there. It may turn into something big, but even if it doesn't we want a good little story on it anyhow."

The new reporter shot out of the door, with perspiration starting at every pore. The fire did not turn out to be a great conflagration, so no more reporters were sent down to the yards to take care of it. The city editor depended upon his new man for the story. But for some unaccountable reason the reporter failed to return to the office and the paper had to go to press without the account of the fire.

The next day about noon the new man strode leisurely into the office entirely unprepared for the thunderstorm that broke over his head as soon as the city editor caught sight of him.

"Say, what the deuce is the matter with you anyhow?" said the editor. "Why didn't you write up that fire that I told you to?"

"Why," gasped the youth, "there wasn't any use to write it up, everybody was there and saw it."—Chicago Chronicle.

Born Among the Bulrushes.

There is a variety of grebe (colymbus minor) which hatches its young on a regular raft. Its nest is a mass of strong stems of aquatic plants closely fastened together. These plants contain a considerable quantity of air in their cells and set free gases in the process of decaying. The air and the gases imprisoned in the plant make the nest lighter than water. The bird usually sits quietly on its eggs, but if any intruder approaches or any danger is feared the mother plunges one foot in the water and using it as a paddle, transports her floating nest to a distance, often dragging along with it a sheet of water plants. A naturalist who frequently watched this remarkable removal says: "The whole structure looks like a little floating island carried along by the labor of the grebe, which moves in the center of a mass of verdure."—Cincinnati Enquirer.

Primitive Methods in Corea.

Individual missionaries and mechanics have trained Corean carpenters in the use of American tools, but as a rule they prefer their old-style planes, which they draw toward them in planing, and like best to use their own saws, which necessitate the employment of two men sitting opposite each other on the ground and operating the saw on the stick or timber, which is held in place by the feet of the operators. In spite of these apparently clumsy methods the Corean carpenters do very fair work.

The Chinese Postal System.

The postal system of the Chinese empire is still in a primitive condition. It is carried on under the direction of the minister of war by means of post carts and runners. There are 8,000 offices for post carts in the eighteen provinces, and there are 2,040 offices for runners scattered over the empire. There are also many private postal couriers, and during the winter the foreign customs office maintains a service between Pekin and the outposts.

Every time a thoughtful man looks around his house he sees purchases that convince him he has been a fool with his money.

Thin Soup.

Perhaps poor people have as good right to their prejudices as those who are better off, but such prejudices are sometimes both expensive and amusing.

In the biography of William Stokes, written by his son, the story is told of Stokes being sent over to Dublin during the great famine to show the people how to make soup. He asked a starving beggar why she did not go and get some of the soup that was being freely distributed.

"Soup, is it, your honor?" said the man. "Sure it isn't soup at all."

"And what is it, then?" inquired Stokes.

"It is nothin', your honor, but a quart of water b'iled down to a pint, to make it strong!"

Jefferson's Ten Rules.

Take things always by the smooth handle.

Pride costs more than hunger, thirst and cold.

We seldom repent of having eaten too little.

Nothing is troublesome that we do willingly.

Never spend your money before you have earned it.

Never buy what you don't want because it is cheap.

Never trouble another for what you can do yourself.

Never put off until to-morrow what you can do to-day.

How much pain the evils have cost us that have never happened.

When angry, count ten before you speak; if very angry count a hundred.

BEST FOR THE BOWELS.

No matter what ails you, headache to a cancer, you will never get well until your bowels are put right. CASCARETS help nature, cure you without a gripe or pain, produce easy natural movements, cost you just 10 cents to start getting your health back. CASCARETS Candy Cathartic, the genuine, put up in metal boxes, every tablet has C. C. C. stamped on it. Beware of imitations.

Not Worth Mentioning.

"I have several reasons for not buying the horse," said the man. "The first is that I haven't the price, and—" "You needn't mention the others," interrupted the owner.—Philadelphia North American.

Do Your Feet Ache and Burn?

Shake out your shoes Allen's Foot-Ease, a powder for the feet. It makes tight or new shoes feel easy. Cures Corns, Bunions, Swollen, Hot and Sweating Feet. At all druggists and shoe stores, 25c. Sample sent FREE. Address Allen S. Olmsted, LeRoy, N. Y.

A Hardship.

"The men's wear is loud this spring," said the salesman, soothingly.

"I should say so. A man can't get a necktie or a colored shirt any more that doesn't look as if his wife had bought it for him."—Washington Star.

Carter's Ink

is so good and so cheap that no family can afford to be without it. Is yours Carter's?

Saving Their Reputations.

Willie Werk—It's so hot that the perspiration's fairly runnin' off of me.

Ragson Tatters—Fer heaven's sake, Willie, make it walk. We've got reputations to pertee.

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is a constitutional cure. Price 75 cents.

A Middy Named Down, only 17 years of age, managed a gun during the Tugela battle, and his coolness was remarkable.

Piso's Cure for Consumption is an infallible medicine for coughs and colds.—N. W. Samuel, Ocean Grove, N. J., Feb. 17, 1900.

Divorce at Copenhagen.

There are more divorces in Copenhagen than in any other European city.

Mrs. Winslow's SOOTHING SYRUP for children teething, softens the gums, reduces inflammation, allays pain, cures wind colic. 25 cents a bottle.

The world is not so much in need of better preaching as it is of better practice.

Gorman as an Interviewer.

Of all the politicians of this generation none has a larger reputation for reserve than former Senator Arthur P. Gorman, of Maryland, who is again taking a prominent part in Democratic politics. Senator Gorman applies to public affairs the famous rule of the great soldier who said that the art of war consisted in finding out what the enemy intended to do. Mr. Gorman is affability itself to the newspaper men that crowd around him for information, but it is a standing joke among them that he does all the interviewing himself.

Every summer Senator Gorman goes to Saratoga for several weeks. One evening Judge Grubb, of Delaware, remarked: "Senator Gorman, you and I have been coming to this hotel for nearly a dozen years, and every summer when I get back home I find that I have told you everything I know, whereas you never tell me a thing."

The Senator smiled and so did those about him, for they appreciated that the Judge had given a capital description of Mr. Gorman.—Philadelphia Press.

Willing.

Rich Young Woman (to her fiancé's servant)—Johnson, I am afraid it is not altogether agreeable to you to have your master marry?

Johnson—Your are mistaken, madam. I shall then be sure at least of securing my back wages.—New York World.

Ab Ak a Boothbay (Maine) fisherman, claims to have the shortest name on record.

The early bird gets caught by the milliner.

Lydia E. Pinkham's

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